



2011 Army Earth Day Message – April 22

Our Army is people – more than 2.2 million Soldiers, Civilians and Family members. Together, we have a big impact on our environment—it's our responsibility to ensure it is a positive impact.

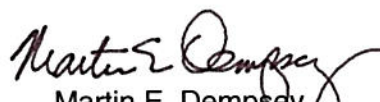
As individuals, there is much we can do to demonstrate our commitment to protecting the environment and becoming more sustainable. Simple things like turning off lights and water faucets when not in use; carpooling; collecting and reusing rain water; reducing the use of individual plastic water bottles; recycling paper, cans and plastic bottles; composting organic waste; minimizing the waste generated; and purchasing energy and water efficient appliances. All contribute to our goal of lessening our collective "footprint" on the Earth.

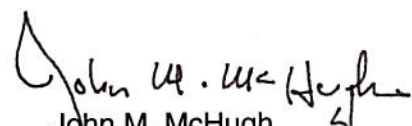
As an Army, we have already done much to protect the natural environment on which we depend. Our installations are exploring ways to produce more energy while consuming less; to ensure that our water usage does not exceed its availability; and to promote recycling, repurposing and reuse. We are also considering the waste stream in all of our purchases by choosing items with less packaging, reusing what we can and recycling the rest. These responsible steps support our dedication to sustaining our environment today to ensure we have enough to perform our mission in the future. When we compare what we consume with what we produce, we strive for a *net zero* end result.

This goal of net zero touches every part of our Army. Our energy programs impact not only the environment at large, but also our Soldiers in the field. For example, promotion of greater fuel efficiency and use of alternative energy technologies can result in fewer fuel convoys and potentially fewer casualties. A military that is not dependent on fossil fuels has the freedom and flexibility to fight in locations where fuel delivery is logistically difficult. Furthermore, money saved by using less fuel can be used for other priorities. Though the Army continues to aggressively expand its efforts in the area of operational energy, it is clear that we need to do more. We must continually consider the impact of everything we do not only on our financial and natural resources, but also on our ability to meet the operational challenges of the future.

As we commemorate Earth Day 2011, we encourage you to take an active role in sustaining the Earth's resources. Look for ways to minimize the Army footprint, as well as your personal footprint. Join us in our commitment to preserve a quality environment, ensure availability of needed resources for the future, and maximize the operational flexibility of our Soldiers.


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Martin E. Dempsey
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